

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT THE 2006 U.S. ELECTIONS

All American citizens are reminded that 2006 is an election year in the United States. Overseas citizens are eligible to participate in primary, run-off, and special elections that occur throughout the year, as well as the general elections in November. A calendar of election dates is available on the Internet at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/primarycal.html>. You are encouraged to register to vote and/or request absentee ballots as early in the year as possible to ensure that you will receive all ballots for which you are eligible.

The following is the basic absentee voting process:

- You complete an application form (see below) and send it to local election officials in the U.S.
- The local official approves your request, or contacts you for further information
- The local official sends you an absentee ballot
- You vote the ballot and send it back in time to meet your state's deadline

If the ballot receipt deadline is drawing near, and you have not yet received the blank ballot from local officials, you can download an emergency ballot, write in the names of the candidates and the offices for which they are running, and send it back in time to meet your state's ballot receipt deadline. The emergency ballot (SF-186, Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot, or FWAB) is available on the Internet at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/forms.html>.

Registration and ballot request procedures and deadlines vary by state. Information about your state's procedures is available on the Internet at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/vag/vagchapter3.html>. Information about your state's registration and voting deadlines is available at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/primarycal.html>.

There may be late changes to your state's voting calendar, procedures or deadlines. When these occur, the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) will issue a News Release. News Releases are available on the Internet at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/releases.html>.

The official US Government website for overseas absentee voting assistance is the Federal Voting Assistance Program website at www.fvap.gov. It has a wealth of information about absentee voting, including the downloadable absentee ballot application (SF-76, Federal Post Card Application, or FPCA),

state-specific instructions for completing the form, links to or contact numbers for state and local officials, and the downloadable emergency ballot.

Overseas Americans may contact Democrats Abroad, Republicans Abroad or other American citizens groups or organizations for absentee voting information, or for assistance in registering to vote or to request absentee ballots. Links to these groups may be found on the FVAP website at <http://www.fvap.gov/links/ocitlinks.html>.

Non-partisan information about candidates, their voting records, and their positions on issues is widely available and easy to obtain via the Internet. You may use the links appearing on the Federal Voting Assistance Program website at <http://www.fvap.gov/links/otherlinks.html>, or you can choose to use one of the many popular search engines to locate articles and information.

Additionally, the Voting Assistance Officer at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate in Vientiane is available to answer questions about absentee voting. To contact the Voting Assistance Officer, call 21-267-000 or send an e-mail to CONSLAO@state.gov. Look for notices from the Embassy/Consulate throughout the year relating to the 2006 elections.

Again, we strongly encourage you to begin this process as soon as possible. Should questions or problems occur, you would still be able to address them in time to vote in your state's primary and general elections.

